

# HAMILTON

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## LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Hamilton Middle School

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

2021-2020



*"Improving Achievement through  
Total Accountability and High Expectations"*

# HAMILTON

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## LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Hamilton Elementary School**  
745 Rathmell Rd.  
Columbus, OH 43207  
Phone (614) 491-8044 ext. 1300  
Fax (614) 492-1499  
Sara Tadak, Principal  
Jessica Wills, Asst. Principal

**Hamilton Intermediate School**  
765 Rathmell Rd.  
Columbus, OH 43207  
Phone (614) 491-8044 ext. 1600  
Fax (614) 492-1059  
Kelly Altiers, Principal  
Shannon Beeker, Asst. Principal

**Hamilton Middle School**  
755 Rathmell Rd.  
Columbus, OH 43207  
Phone (614) 491-8044 ext. 1500  
Fax (614) 491-0260  
Jeff Endres, Principal  
Matt Thompson, Asst. Principal

**Hamilton Twp. High School**  
1105 Rathmell Road  
Columbus, OH 43207  
Phone (614) 491-8044 ext. 1800  
Fax (614) 492-1495  
Dr. Josh Conley, Principal  
Matthew O'Hearn, Asst. Principal

### Superintendent's Message

To all of our Rangers,

On behalf of the members of our Board of Education, district administrators, along with our faculty and staff, I would like to welcome you to a new school year in the Hamilton Local School District.

As we make our way through this school year, I ask that you push yourself to do your best everyday. It is up to you to give your best effort, show kindness to your classmates and teachers, and have a positive impact while you are in our schools.

Trust the process. Stay engaged. Stay involved. There are many opportunities throughout the year for you to learn and grow as a student through classroom lessons, during district-sponsored extracurricular activities, or by being involved in community service initiatives. It is my hope that every student takes full advantage of programming offered in each of our schools.

Finally, I want to ask that when you have a question or need assistance with something in our district, please communicate with us directly. We are here to help and serve our community. Contact your teacher, building secretary, building principal, or district administrator with any questions or concerns so we can provide the answers directly.

I hope you have a great school year. Go Rangers!

Sincerely,  
Mark Tyler, Superintendent

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>Pg.</b>
<b>Building Contacts / Introduction</b>	2
<b>General Information</b>	4
School Calendar	4
Daily Schedule	5
Medications	6
Visitors	8
Cafeteria / Lunches / Breakfast	10
School Phones	10
Volunteers	11
Curriculum and Grading	11
Academic Requirements	12
Progress Book	12
Work	13
Programs/Organizations/Clubs	14
Athletics	15
Student Services and Guidance	16
<b>District Wide Policies</b>	16
Attendance Policy	16
Dress and Grooming Policy	20
Conduct Policy	21
Bus Conduct Policy	30
Comprehensive Safety Plan	30

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**GENERAL INFORMATION**

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**SCHOOL CALENDAR 2021-2022**

Mon., Aug. 9	Open House/Schedule Pick-up 4:00-7:30 pm
Wed., Aug. 11	First Day for students
Wed., Aug. 11	Begin 1 <sup>st</sup> Grading Period
Thurs. Aug. 26	Curriculum Night- 4:00-7:30 pm
Mon., Sept. 6	NO SCHOOL – Labor Day
Wed., Sept. 15	Interim Reports Notification
Thurs. Oct. 14	End 1 <sup>st</sup> Grading Period
Fri., Oct. 15	NO SCHOOL- Teacher Professional Day
Mon., Oct. 18	Begin 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grading Period
Wed., Oct. 20	1 <sup>st</sup> Nine Weeks Report Card Notification
Wed. Oct. 27	Parent-Teacher Conferences
Wed., Nov. 17	Interim Reports Notification
Wed., Nov. 24-26	NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Holiday
Fri., Dec. 17	End 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grading Period
Mon. Dec. 20-Jan. 3	NO SCHOOL –Winter Break
Mon., Jan. 3	Teacher Professional Day
Tues., Jan 4	Begin 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grading Period
Wed. Jan. 5	2 <sup>nd</sup> Nine Weeks Report Card Notification
Thurs., Jan. 13	Parent-Teacher Conferences
Mon., Jan. 17	NO SCHOOL – Martin Luther King Day
Wed., Feb. 2	Interim Report Notification
Mon., Feb. 21	NO SCHOOL - Presidents Day
Fri., Mar. 4	End Third Grading Period
Mon., Mar. 7	No School- Teacher Professional Day
Tues., Mar. 8	Begin 4 <sup>th</sup> Grading Period
Wed., Mar. 9	3 <sup>rd</sup> Nine Weeks Report Card Notification
Mon., Mar. 28-April 2	NO SCHOOL-Spring Break
Wed., April 13	Interim Report Notification
Fri., April 15	NO SCHOOL
Thurs., May 19	Last Day Students
Thurs., May 19	End Fourth Grading Period
Fri., May 20	4 <sup>th</sup> Nine Weeks Report Notification

**Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Monday August 9<sup>th</sup>- Open House/Schedule Pick-up 4:00-7:30 pm  
Thursday August 26<sup>th</sup>- Curriculum Night- 4:00-7:30 pm  
Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>- 4:00 p.m-7:30 p.m.  
Thursday, January 13<sup>th</sup>- 4:00 p.m-7:30 p.m.

**Alma Mater**

Oh Hamilton,  
We love your green and gold.  
Oh Hamilton,  
We're here to say  
We know you'll fight  
'Til you have victory  
And all your enemies have gone away.  
Our loyalty is yours forever more.  
Our voices sing to you with loudest cheers  
And as we onward go to victory,  
We'll sing your name a thousand years.

*Ralph Juniper, Faculty Member 1946*

**School Hours**

The school will open at 7:00 a.m. Students who must arrive before this time and must remain in the cafeteria or in a pre-arranged classroom with a teacher until 7:25a.m. Once you arrive on school property, you are to enter the building and remain on school property. You may go to your locker after the 7:25 a.m. bell. All students are expected to be out of the building by **2:30 p.m.** unless they are engaged in a supervised after school activity.

**Daily Schedule**

Period	Start	End
HR	7:31	7:37
1	7:37	8:25
2 (AIM)	8:28	9:16
3	9:19	10:07
4 (Lunch)	10:10	10:58
5 (Lunch)	11:01	11:49
6 (Lunch)	11:52	12:40
7	12:43	1:31
8	1:34	2:25

**Directory Information**

The Hamilton Local School Board of Education defines the following data in the student records as directory information: name; address; date and place of birth; extracurricular participation; achievement awards or honors; weight and height of members of athletic teams; dates of attendance, and date of graduation. Directory information will be released without the consent of the student or the parent unless the school has been notified **in writing** not to release such information.

**Photographic Notification**

Periodically, candid group photographs of student activities are taken at Hamilton Local Schools. If you do not wish to have your child included in such photographs, please notify the school office in writing.

### **School Website**

Hamilton Local Schools operates and maintains a website as a valuable information resource for students, parents, staff, and community members. From here you can access individual building web pages, teacher web pages and ProgressBook to monitor to your child's academic progress. Please visit our web site at [www.hamiltonrangers.org](http://www.hamiltonrangers.org).

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks have been adopted and purchased by the Board of Education to be used in implementing the approved graded courses of study. Students will have the opportunity to use the textbooks by receiving one for personal use for the length of the course, or by use of one of the classroom set of books. In classes where books are issued to each student, the teacher will make a record of the book number and name in front of the textbooks where it is so indicated. Pen should be used to avoid the name being erased and the book being used by another student. The student becomes responsible for any textbook assigned and/or used by him/her during the length of the school year. Issued textbooks must be covered with an appropriate book cover. The cost of repair or replacement will be assessed against the student responsible for the lost or damaged book. Records and grade cards will be withheld from students who do not meet such obligations.

### **Textbook Repair and Replacement**

The following guide will be used to cover repair and replacement cost of damaged and/or lost textbooks.

Normal wear	No charge
Damaged	\$10.00*
Damaged beyond future use or lost	Replacement cost Based on condition

\*This is a minimum charge that can be adjusted to reflect the actual amount of the damage.

### **Media Center**

Our Instructional Media Center is open during school hours and students are encouraged to make good use of this facility. The media specialist will review procedures for the use of the media center during orientation sessions. All materials checked out from the Media Center must be returned. Lost materials must be paid for or grade cards and/or records will be withheld.

### **Clinic/Nurse**

The parents are responsible for informing the school each year of their child's specific health concerns, medical diagnoses, and medications. This information should be provided on the emergency contact information at the beginning of each school year and be updated, using the online procedures established by the district throughout the year as changes arise. We have a district nurse who is available for consultation regarding the management of your child's health concerns at school. The nurse travels between buildings throughout the school day and is on call at all times for emergencies. If you need to speak with someone regarding your child's health, please call 614-491-8044, ext. 1500.

### **Medications**

The majority of medications for students should be administered at home (i.e.-those ordered once, twice, or three times a day). However, there may be instances in which it is necessary for a student to take medication during the school day whether it is scheduled or on an as needed basis. For medications requiring administration at school, the following must be followed:

1. The parent/guardian and the licensed prescriber (physician, dentist, advanced practice nurse, or physician's assistant) must complete the required sections of the Medication Consent Form. A consent form for each medication, prescription or over-the-counter, must be completed and returned to the school before trained school personnel will administer any medication. This form can be obtained

in our school's main office and on our district website under the Important Forms & Links or Student Registration sections. **Please note: There is one general form for use with most medications, one form to permit students to carry asthma inhalers, and one form to permit students to carry epinephrine pens.**

2. All medication must be delivered to school by the parent/guardian. Prescription medications must be received in the pharmacy container labeled with the prescribing information matching the information provided on the completed Medical Consent form. Over-the-counter medications must be received in the original, unopened container labeled with the student's name. **Students are not permitted to carry or transport medications with the exception of asthma inhalers and epinephrine pens with the proper consents in place.**

3. Parents are responsible for picking up unused medications at the end of the school year. These will not be sent home with the student. Any medications not picked up by the beginning of the next school year will be disposed of.

4. New request forms must be submitted each year and whenever there is any change in the medication order by the licensed prescriber (i.e.- changes in the dose or time).

#### **Contact Information Changes**

Parents/guardians are responsible for immediately updating any changes in **phone number or address** using the online procedure as established by the district. This is necessary to maximize the **safety** of your child. To access your child's information, visit <http://hamilton.esvportal.comw>. login to your Hamilton OneView account, and click on "Student Demographics & EMA."

#### **Accidents and Illness**

If a child has an accident or becomes ill at school, a parent will be notified to come and get the child. If a parent cannot be contacted, the alternate person on the emergency contact information will be notified. Any student who has a fever of 100 degrees or greater, vomiting, diarrhea, or signs and symptoms of a possible communicable disease will be sent home. Please keep students with a possible or known communicable disease home until they are symptom-free or have been treated for at least 24 hours. **Only the persons whose names appear on the emergency contact information will be permitted to pick up or release a child from school because of injury or illness. Before we will release a child, a photo ID must be presented and the name should match what is on the Emergency Contact Information.**

#### **Immunizations**

In compliance with the Ohio Compulsory Immunization Law, no pupil shall be admitted to school unless he/she presents written evidence that they have received the required immunizations by such means as approved by the Department of Health, pursuant to the powers granted by the Ohio Revised Code or unless such student presents a written statement from his parents or guardian objecting to such immunization because of medical or religious grounds. However, if an outbreak occurs, the student will be excluded from school. All new students entering the district from a foreign country are required to have a TB test. Immunization clinics are provided by the Franklin County Health Department and the Columbus Health Department for a nominal fee.

#### **Supplemental Student Accident Insurance**

The Hamilton Local School District recognizes that students may suffer injuries in the course of attendance at school. Accordingly, the District provides insurance coverage as authorized by Ohio law and makes available to parent's insurance coverage for other incidents. The District is not permitted to use public funds for insurance to cover injuries sustained in the course of attendance at school and is immune from damage as is authorized by Ohio law and Chapter 2744 of the Ohio Revised Code and the Sovereign Immunity Law of the State of Ohio.

The Board provides parents the opportunity to purchase group insurance coverage, at no cost to the Board, for injury resulting from accidents sustained by students in school, on school grounds, at an activity sponsored by the school, while traveling between home and school or in any activity round-the-clock. The purchase of this program is optional. The Board requires, as per Board of Education Policy JHA, that: students participating in interscholastic school athletics must be covered by some type of accident insurance. The insurance may be the accident policy, which has been approved by the Board or a similar policy type acquired elsewhere by the student or his/her parents. The requirements of this policy are contained in the district athletic handbook.

The board maintains insurance coverage for injury resulting from accidents sustained in the course of transportation under the authority of the Board.

### **Halls**

Students should be in the halls only at the beginning and close of school and while moving from one class to another, unless they have special permission or special duties that require them to be there. Students are asked to be courteous at all times and to keep to the right when moving in the halls. Running and shouting in the halls is never permitted. A student must have an approved hall pass in order to be permitted in the hall during class time. This hall pass must be initialed by a staff member with the time documented. Any abuse of pass privileges during class time or lunch periods may result in the loss of pass privileges for the grading period.

### **Signs/Advertising**

All signs which are to be placed on the outside or inside of school property must be approved by the building administration.

### **Outside Building**

Students are not permitted outside the building or on other school building properties during school hours unless accompanied by a staff member or have written permission from staff or administration.

### **School Visitors**

All adult members of our community are welcome to visit the school. However, an appointment must be scheduled prior to the visit. **State law requires that any person visiting the school report directly to the school office. Once the visitation has been approved, each visitor must sign in and provide a picture I.D. Each visitor will then receive a school pass that must be worn and visible during the visit.** This procedure will assist in providing a safe environment for all students. Parents are encouraged to keep open communication with classroom teachers. Teachers have regularly assigned times when conferences can be scheduled. Any conference with teachers should be scheduled in advance.

### **Child Custody/Divorced Parents**

The school wants to cooperate with the parents of our students, but we must do so according to Ohio laws. Sometimes parents have disagreements and make requests of school personnel regarding releasing children during the day. If custodial arrangements, which have been court ordered, restrict access to the child or his/her records, a copy of that order must be on file in our office. This court-issued document directs the school, not necessarily the wishes of one parent or the other. The adult checking the child out must sign for the child's release. Parents have an obligation to inform the school anytime the custody of a child changes. The school officials will need to see and copy court orders pertaining to a child's custody.

### **Non-Custodial Parent Record(s) Access**

A divorce or change in custody does not change the rights of a natural parent to their child's records. A non-custodial parent may request and receive a copy of the child's report card, the permanent record, and the opportunity to hold a teacher conference. Only the custodial parent has the right to make educational decisions requested by the school. Stepparents have no legal rights to records, reports, or conferences unless these rights are granted by the custodial parent.

### **School Fees and Fines**

Students attending Hamilton Local Schools are required to pay a \$50.00 student supply fee. In accordance with board policy, report cards and records will be withheld for those students who have not met financial obligations and/or have not returned all school/district property.

**THE STUDENT SUPPLY FEE OF \$50.00 HAS BEEN WAIVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR.**

### **Technology Fee**

Students attending Hamilton Local Schools in grades 1 through 12 are required to pay a \$25.00 Technology Fee per year. Families that qualify for free lunch are not required to pay this fee. (See "Lunch Program" below on how to submit for the Federal School Lunch Program.)

### **Fund Raising and Selling in the School**

Students may participate in only school-approved fundraisers when soliciting within the school. Items are not to be brought into the school to be sold. Money and/or merchandise are not to be exchanged between students unless it is part of an approved fundraiser. Fund Raising and selling may be approved for school related activities only. Fund raising, selling or buying without **principal approval** is prohibited.

### **Pay to Participate Activity Fees (Middle & High School)**

Students who choose to participate in the following activities are required to pay, in accordance to each family situation, the appropriate amount. The following activities require a \$75.00 per season activity fee. (Waived for the 2021-22 School Year)

- District-sponsored Athletic Teams
- Cheerleading (one time yearly fee)
- Drama-School Play
- Band-Competitive Marching

There will be a **\$225.00** maximum per student per year and a family maximum of **\$450.00** per year. The "Pay to Participate" program does not apply to all activities related to a course of study or those groups/clubs that meet predominantly during the school day. If you need further details concerning our Pay to Participate Activity Fees, you may contact the Office of Athletics at 491-8044 ext. 1808 or the Director of Bands/Drama at 491-8044 ext. 1842. The Pay to Participate Activity Fee form can be found in our Important Forms & Links section of our district website.

Students may participate in only school approved fundraisers when soliciting within the school. Items are not to be brought into the school to be sold. Money and/or merchandise are not to be exchanged between students unless it is part of an approved fundraiser.

Fund Raising and selling may be approved for school related activities only. Fundraising, selling or buying without administrative approval is prohibited.

**School Lunches**

Each school provides the opportunity for students to eat a well-balanced hot meal. The cost for the school lunch for 2021-2022 is \$2.50 (subject to change). An a-la-carte lunch is also available and the price for each item will be posted. Students bringing their lunch from home will eat in the cafeteria and can buy additional food or drink items if desired. All food items are to remain in the cafeteria. Hamilton Local Schools participates in the Federal School Lunch Program.

Our online application for this program is made available to you through our new Hamilton OneView Parent portal. Visit <http://hamilton.esvportal.com>, login to your Hamilton OneView Portal account, and click on the Free & Reduced Lunch Application. If you haven't setup an account at this time, please do so as soon as possible and complete your child's forms. Students will be notified of their eligibility after their application has been reviewed. If you have any questions about our lunch program, please contact Mrs. Hillerich at 614-491-8044 ext. 1860.

**Breakfast Program**

We are happy to offer a FREE, filling and nutritional breakfast for all Hamilton students. Students can choose to pick up a grab-and-go breakfast through the regular cafeteria line. We encourage all students to take full advantage of our breakfast program.

**Cafeteria/Fee Payment and Account Systems**

**EZPay** is an easy, convenient, and secure way to pay for school meals and all other fees. Available online via a secure web portal, EZPay allows you to quickly add lunch money to your child's account and pay for all fees that are associated with your child's education or activities. Creating your EZPay account is a very simple process. All you need is a valid email address, your child's student number (contact their school to get it if you don't have it), and a couple minutes to complete the registration process. EZPay allows you to make payments using a debit or credit card. You can access EZPay by clicking on the EZPay logo located on our district or school website home page. You may also access EZPay by searching the keyword "EZPay" in the search box on our website.

**Cafeteria**

Hamilton Schools has a closed lunch policy. For the safety of all students, visitors will not be permitted in the cafeteria during school lunch times. Administrative discretion will be used in emergency situations. Students are to report directly to the lunchroom at their assigned time and may go to the restroom, or their locker with permission from the assigned teacher/supervisor. Student behavior in the dining room should be based on courtesy and cleanliness. This means leaving the area in the condition you would like to live in. Students will go through the cafeteria line and pay for their choice of food. Students are to remain in the cafeteria until they have finished eating. At no time are pupils allowed to take food or drink items outside of the cafeteria. Students are not to go into areas where classes are being held during their lunch hour.

**Lockers (6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

All students will be assigned a locker. Lockers are property of the Hamilton Local Board of Education. Lockers carry no expectation of privacy for the students who occupy them. School lockers and their contents are subject to search by school authorities at any time and without warning.

**School Telephone**

Student use of the school phone is allowed only after approval by the secretary or principal and will be kept to a minimum. The school reserves the right to refuse the use of its telephone for unnecessary calls. The school secretary will place all approved student initiated calls. Any charges for directory assistance, line interruption, etc., will be billed to the student's parents/guardian.

**Book Bags/Backpacks/Purses/Handbags**

Book bags, backpacks, purses, handbags etc. are permitted in the building; however, they must be placed in the student's assigned locker or cubby until the conclusion of the day. Book bags, backpacks, purses and handbags etc. are not permitted in classrooms unless approval is granted by the classroom teacher or building administrator.

**Assemblies**

At various times during the year the school will conduct assemblies. These assemblies are special activities held during the school day to educate as well as foster student interest and involvement. They are chosen to enrich units of study or provide positive motivational messages. Whether guests are present or not, each student is personally responsible for the impression made by the school as a whole. Unacceptable conduct includes whistling, uncalled-for clapping, boisterousness, and talking during a program. Improper behavior may result in removal from current and future assemblies. Textbooks and other materials are to be left in the classroom. Attendance at non-mandatory assemblies may be denied due to behavior, academic or attendance concerns.

**Volunteers**

On behalf of Hamilton Local Schools, we appreciate all of our volunteers that work with us. We recognize that parents are our partners and that our goals are shared ones. Please understand an approved volunteer does not have open access to school buildings. The volunteer must have approval from an administrator of the building for any activities they will participate in. If you wish to volunteer, you must complete the following and have it approved by administration.

1. Volunteer information sheet.
2. An employment / volunteer application.
3. Photo copy of current drivers license
4. Volunteer release and indemnification agreement
5. Bureau of criminal identification and investigation (BCI) check

**Dances**

Dances may be scheduled during the school year for students to socialize in a controlled school setting. Dances may be used as fund-raisers for school clubs and organizations or as incentives for students. A dance is a school event, which requires the cooperation of all attending. It is the school's way of showing appreciation for good student behavior and adherence to the rules, regulations and attendance policies. Transportation is required promptly at the end of the scheduled dance.

**To be eligible to attend dances, students must not have an office discipline referral, PLUS, ISS, or OSS during the week of the scheduled dance. Only current Hamilton Middle School students are permitted to attend middle school dances. Participation in school dances is a privilege students can earn by exhibiting responsible and cooperative behavior throughout the school year. Students may be denied the privilege to attend the dances due to behavioral, academic, or attendance concerns.**

**The Student Code of Conduct and Dress and Grooming Policies are enforced during all school-sponsored activities.**

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**CURRICULUM AND GRADING**

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**Academic Requirements**

At Hamilton Middle School a 100-point numerical scale (%) is used to report grades to students and parents. The letter grade and achievement level is as follows:

### Grade Point Average

To calculate grade point average, assign the following point value to all grades earned:  
93-100% (A = 4.00), 90-92% (A- = 3.75), 87-89% (B+ = 3.25), 83-86% (B = 3.00), 80-82% (B- = 2.75),  
77-79% (C+ = 2.25), 73-76% (C = 2.00), 70-72% (C- = 1.75), 67-69% (D+ = 1.25), 63-66% (D = 1.00),  
60-62% (D- = .75), 0-59% (F = 0).

### QTR Grades are based on the following Criteria:

Coursework	= 20%
Benchmark Progress	= 60%
CBA	= 20%
Total	=100%

### Grading Procedures

Interim Grade Reports will be handed out once per nine weeks. Grade cards will be issued one week after the end of each nine-week grading period. Final grades are based on the following percentages:

#### Year Long Courses

1 <sup>st</sup> Nine Weeks	25%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Nine Weeks	25%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Nine Weeks	25%
4 <sup>th</sup> Nine Weeks	25%
Final Grade	100%

#### Semester Courses

1 <sup>st</sup> Nine Weeks	50%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Nine Weeks	50%
Final Grade	100%

### Progress Book: Parent Access

Parents/Guardians have online access to their child's academic progress. Teachers enter daily attendance and grades into ProgressBook (a web-based system for reporting student information) and then parents/guardians can login and view it.

Please be aware, however, that student grades and/or test results may not be entered on a daily basis. Teachers need time to collect, grade, and input the information, so please be understanding. Please contact the teacher directly with concerns.

To access your child's information:

1. From a web browser go to: <https://parentaccess.mecdc.org>
2. Click on the Progress Book Parent Access icon.
3. Click on the Hamilton Ranger icon.
4. Enter your username and password (contained in the access letter sent home from the office).
5. Please go to the "My Account" tab after you login for the first time and enter your email address in the contact information area. Also, you can change your login name and password (to something easier to remember) and link any of your additional children to the same account.

### Progress Reports and Report Cards

All Hamilton students will receive a progress report once each quarter. The progress report will be posted approximately 4.5 weeks into the nine-week grading period. At the end of each grading period, reports cards will be posted to Progress Book the week following the end of the quarter. If you have any questions concerning your child's progress report or quarterly report card, please contact your child's school office.

### Academic Honors

Those students with a G.P.A. of 3.8 to 4.0 will receive the recognition of the Principal's Honor Roll. Those with a G.P.A. of 3.0 to 3.7 will be awarded the recognition of Honor Roll. To calculate grade

point average, assign the point value to all grades earned and divide by the total number of classes. A G.P.A. cannot be calculated with any incomplete class.

### **Promotion and Retention**

The Board of Education recognizes that the personal, social, physical, and educational growth of children will vary and that students should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their needs at the various stages of their growth.

It shall be the policy of the Board that each student be moved forward in a continuous pattern of achievement and growth that is in harmony with his/her own development. Such pattern should coincide with the system of grade levels established by the Board and the instructional objectives for each.

A student will be promoted to the succeeding grade levels when he/she has demonstrated the degree of academic proficiency and social, emotional, and physical maturation necessary for a successful learning experience in the next grade.

### **Factors for promotion, placement, and retention:**

A student's academic grades, mental ability, age, physical maturity, emotional and social development, state and local assessment results. Teacher recommendations are considered when making placement decisions.

### **Guidelines for promotion, placement, and retention:**

- Every effort will be made to work with the student and parents to remediate the student's difficulties before he/she is retained.
- Students who have unexcused absences for more than 10% of the required school attendance days and have failed two or more subjects will be retained unless the principal and the teachers determine the student is academically prepared for promotion.
- The student must successfully complete a majority of the required academic subjects in order to be promoted.
- Parents will be informed of the possibility of retention of a student at a grade level during the first part of second semester.
- Final decisions on student promotion, placement, or retention rest with the building principal.

### **Make-up Work**

Students who are absent will be required to make up work missed in each class. The number of days absent determines the number of days allowed to make up the work. In extreme cases, arrangements will be made for makeup. If a student is made aware of a test or assignment before he/she is absent he/she must make up the test or assignment immediately upon returning to school unless the teacher prefers other arrangements. Students are responsible for obtaining all make-up work from his/her teachers immediately upon return to school. Parents may request student work to be picked up in office after 2:30. Failure to obtain make-up work is no excuse for not doing the work.

### **Homework**

Homework may be assigned to pupils to provide additional practice in subject areas, or to give opportunities to work on special projects. Questions regarding homework should be directed to the teacher involved. It is suggested that a place, time, and work area be provided for your student to establish and encourage good study habits. Many assignments are designed to encourage and promote parent/student/school interaction.

**Field Trips**

The teachers at Hamilton Middle School may plan extended field trips for students. The purpose of these trips is to extend the curriculum and provide opportunities for students that cannot happen in a regular school setting. Participation in these trips is a privilege students can earn by exhibiting responsible and cooperative behavior throughout the school year. Students may be denied the privilege to participate in these trips due to behavioral, academic, or attendance concerns. Decisions regarding participation are made by the building principal with input from the teachers.

**The Student Code of Conduct and Dress and Grooming Policies are enforced during all school-sponsored activities.**

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**PROGRAMS/ORGANIZATIONS/CLUBS**

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Hamilton Middle School offers many opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular programs, organizations, and clubs. Participating in such activities is a privilege and not a right. The administration reserves the right to deny participation due to violation of code of conduct or attendance policy.

**National Junior Honor Society**

Membership in the NJHS is granted only to those students selected by the Faculty Council. The Council consists of five members appointed by the principal. The council is responsible, with input from the general faculty, for selection of new NJHS members. The Council is responsible for issuing warnings and/or dismissing members who do not maintain the standards of the NJHS.

Students interested in membership in the National Junior Honor Society should keep the following in mind:

- Candidates must have a cumulative scholastic average of 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale) or the equivalent standard of excellence. (Average based on the final grades for sixth grade and the first nine-weeks of the seventh grade.)
- Candidates will be evaluated on the basis of leadership, service, character, and citizenship.
- It is required that candidates fill out the Student Activity Information Form completely, including all the activities in which they have been involved.

**Student Council**

The purpose of the Student Council is to represent the student body of Hamilton Middle School. The Student Council, through its representatives, permits students to have a voice in the operation of the school. It endeavors to reflect student ideas to the staff and administration. During the first month of the school year, four students are selected to serve as officers on the Student Council for the year. Also, in the fall, house, club, and group representatives are installed. These representatives are the spokespersons at the Student Council Meetings and have the responsibilities of keeping classmates informed of the actions taken by the Council.

**Model United Nations**

Selected seventh, and eighth grade students attend the Junior Ohio Model United Nations. The Model United Nations is an entire global education learning experience that incorporates numerous lifelong opportunities. Middle school students from across the state learn skills in communications, leadership, and cooperative learning.

**Band**

Students in grades 7-8 have the opportunity to participate in an instrumental group during the school day. Instruction is provided during the day and performances are scheduled throughout the school year both during and after the school day. Parent permission and director approval are required for

admission and there is a cost for instrument and workbook. There are several financial options available for the parents regarding the instruments, as well as school owned instruments available for loan based on family need.

### **Choir**

Students in grades 7-8 have the opportunity to participate in a choral group during the school day. Instruction is provided during the day and performances are scheduled throughout the school year both during and after the school day. Parent permission, an interview-audition and director approval are required for all new participants. Students will learn sight-reading techniques, music theory and group vocal instruction in addition to preparation for concerts.

### **Art Club**

This club is for those students who like to meet with other students who have interests in art. Students are given opportunities to improve their artistic skills.

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## **ATHLETICS**

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### **Eligibility/Extracurricular**

Hamilton Middle School is a member of the Ohio High School Athletic Association. According to the Ohio High School Athletic Association guidelines, only seventh and eighth grade students may participate in interscholastic sports.

In order to play in a game, players must be in attendance for one-half day during the day of the game. The student must be in attendance for the entire day on the day following a contest unless the student has a doctor's excuse or special permission from the principal. Ohio High School Athletic Association policies are the policies adopted and adhered to by Hamilton Middle School. Those requirements for the 2020-2021 school year are as follows:

- Any student that is 15 years old before September 1st of a given school year is ineligible for that school year.
- All seventh-grade students enrolling in that grade for the first time are eligible regardless of previous academic achievement.
- Eighth grade students that pass 75% of their classes the last grading period of the previous school year are eligible for the first grading period of the next school year.
- At the end of the first grading period, a seventh or eighth grade student that is passing 75% of his/her classes is eligible for the second grading period.
- Grading periods three and four follow the same procedures and requirements as the second grading period.
- Changes in athletic eligibility will become effective on the start of the fifth school day after the end of the grading period.

### **Athletic Conduct Code and Due Process**

All students will receive a copy of the Athletic Conduct Code and Due Process when trying out and participating.

### **Sportsmanship**

Extracurricular activities are privileges as well as part of the total educational process and the same level of responsibility and behavior is expected at practices and competitions as is expected in the classroom. Should an individual student act in a manner detrimental to the school and student body at any extra/co-curricular activity, either as a contestant or a fan, he/she will lose the right to attend contests and events involving other students and schools and may be subject to further disciplinary

action. In addition, all Hamilton Middle School students at home games are to sit on the home team side of the stadium or gymnasium.

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## **STUDENT SERVICES AND GUIDANCE**

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The school guidance department is staffed with one part time counselor. The school counselor is available to help make the student's years at Hamilton Middle School successful and satisfying ones. Every student and parent is encouraged to take advantage of the services offered through the guidance and counseling department. The counselor provides the following services:

- Confidential help with individual concerns (academic, organizational skills, study skills, issues with friends, family, school, stress management, etc.)
- Group counseling
- Peer mediation and conflict resolution
- Classroom activities that assist teachers
- Consultation on parenting issues
- Assistance and participation in parent-teacher conferences
- Linkage to community resources

### **Student Orientation**

We believe that a successful student experience begins with a friendly, informative, and welcoming orientation. All new students to the building participate in an orientation program, organized and conducted by the staff, which provides students and parents with information necessary for a successful and rewarding educational experience. The orientation program includes the following:

- Schedule explanation
- Code of conduct
- Dress code
- Attendance code
- Building tour

### **Standardized Testing**

All Hamilton Middle students will take all state required assessments.

### **Eastland/Fairfield Career Center**

In the spring of each year all of our eighth grade students will be visited by representatives from the Eastland/Fairfield Career Center. This visit gives students the opportunity to view, question, and explore the many educational opportunities that the career center has to offer.

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## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

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*The State of Ohio Revised Code (O.R.C.) 3321.04 of Chapter 3321 School Attendance states that, "Every parent of any child of compulsory age (6 – 18 years) who is not employed under the Age and School Certificate must send such child to a school or special education program that confirms to the minimum standards as prescribed by the State Board of Education. The child must attend full time the school program is in session."*

*Except in cases where a pupil has been properly excused, his/her parent or guardian has the primary responsibility for requiring school attendance (O.R.C. 3321.04/3321.07) and the failure to send a child to school may result in a fine of up to \$500, community service of up to 70 hours, or, if repeated, a jail sentence for the offending parent (O.R.C. 3321.38, 3321.99).*

*Ohio Revised Code 3313.609 prohibits the promotion of a student to the next grade level if the student has been truant for more than 10% of the required attendance days (178) of the current school year and has failed two or more of the required curriculum subject areas in the current*

***grade unless the student's principal and the teachers of any failed subject areas agree that the student is academically prepared to be promoted to the next grade level.***

All Hamilton Local School District students are expected to be in school and to attend all assigned classes every day. Any attendance pattern contrary to this will be investigated. Parents or guardians of students who are truant or habitually tardy from school may be required to attend a parental education or training program and/or an attendance intervention meeting. The failure of a parent or guardian to attend such program constitutes "parental educational neglect" under the Ohio Criminal Code, which is punishable as a fourth degree misdemeanor. School attendance is closely related to school success; therefore the following attendance regulations will be in effect in the Hamilton Local School District.

A student shall not be absent from school for any portion of the school day without authorization. After arriving on school property, a student may not leave without permission. Students under the age of 18 years must be signed out by a person identified on their emergency contact information. No student under the age of 18 years will be permitted to leave school unaccompanied based on a telephone call to the school office, nor without prior written consent of a parent or guardian. Excessive absenteeism to school or class may result in disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

**THE ADMINISTRATION OF HAMILTON LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO WITHHOLD PROMOTION FROM A STUDENT MISSING MORE THAN EIGHTEEN (18) CLASS MEETINGS PER YEAR OR NINE (9) PER SEMESTER.**

**Notification of absence from school** - In the event that a student must be absent from school, the parent or guardian is required to contact the school, either by phone or in person during the first 120 minutes of school. Absences of students, which are not verified by parent contact with the office within three (3) days, will be viewed as unexcused. A student's absence from school is excused by parent notification for a maximum sixty-five (65) hours. Once a student reaches sixty-five (65) hours of absences excused or unexcused, doctor verification is required for additional absences to be considered excused.

Students will not be penalized for absences related to contracting COVID-19 or having to quarantine or isolate due to COVID-19 exposure/symptoms, regardless of whether the student is participating in-person, remotely or both.

**Reasons for which students may be medically excused include, but are not limited to:**

1. Personal illness of the student
2. Illness in the student's family necessitating the presence of the child
3. Quarantine for contagious disease
4. Emergency or other set of circumstances in which the judgment of the Superintendent constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school, which may include but not be limited to absences due to documented medical appointments.

Any limits that may be in place regarding the number of medical excuses that will be authorized without a doctor's note may be extended if the student or someone in the student's family is in quarantine due to COVID-19 or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

**Reasons for which students may be non-medically excused include, but are not limited to:**

1. Needed at home to perform necessary work directly and exclusively for parents or legal guardians for a limited period of time when approved by the Superintendent (applies to students over 14 years of age only)

2. Death in the family (applies to absences of up to 18 hours unless a reasonable cause may be shown for a longer absence)
3. Observation of a religious holiday consistent with a student's truly held religious belief
4. Traveling out of state to attend a Board-approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity (applies to absences of up to 24 school hours)
5. College visitation
6. Absences due a student's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to their foster care status
7. Absences due to a student being homeless
8. Temporary internet outage for individual students or households
9. Technical difficulties for individual students or households occurring at inopportune times such as during a teacher-led remote learning lesson
10. Absences due to COVID-19 reasons that are not considered medically excused until alternative arrangements can be made or
11. As determined by Superintendent

**Hamilton Middle School Attendance Line** – Parents calling in to inform the school of a student absence must contact the attendance line directly and speak with or leave a voice message for the attendance secretary with student name, grade, date(s) of absence, reason for absence, and any additional pertinent information.

**HMS ATTENDANCE LINE – (614) 491-8044 ext. 1599**

**Make up of missed work** - Students with absences will be permitted to complete make-up work missed while absent.

**Doctor, dentist or counselor visits or appointments** - Parents are encouraged to schedule their child's appointments with doctors, dentists and counselors during non-school hours. If the student consults a doctor, he/she must supply a statement from the doctor to that effect immediately upon returning to school.

**Unexcused absences** - If unexcused absences are not resolved in three (3) school days, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. The final decision as to the acceptability of an excuse will rest with the building administration.

**Parent notification of absence** - When the student becomes habitually truant or excessively absent, an Absence Notification Letter will be mailed home to the parent or guardian. When a student's absences surpass the threshold for habitual truant, the student will be assigned to an absence intervention team and an intervention plan will be implemented.

**Tardiness** - Students will be considered tardy when they are not present at the designated beginning of school. An authorized tardy will be considered only in cases of an illness which is confirmed by a doctor, or pre planned medical treatment by a doctor. All students arriving late to school must sign-in at the office. The student will then be issued a pass, which will admit them to the appropriate class. Tardiness to class or school may result in disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

**Early Dismissal:** An authorized early dismissal will be considered only in cases of an illness, which is confirmed by a doctor and/or school nurse/nurse aide, or if a pre-planned medical treatment by a doctor is confirmed with written documentation. Unexcused early dismissals from school may result in disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct. All students being picked up must be dismissed from the school office. Any person signing a student out of school, must be listed on the

student's Emergency Contact Information and provide a photo I.D. To avoid instructional interruptions, early dismissals should be kept to a minimum. **Students will not be called to the office from class until an adult is present in the office to sign the student out.**

**Extracurricular Events/Activities** – A student who is absent without excuse or due to illness cannot attend after school extracurricular events/activities.

**Vacations** - Vacations are defined as an extended absence from school with the immediate family. Excused vacations will be limited to thirty-three (33) hours per year, unless specific approval is given by building administration. Approved vacation requests will count as parent notified absences and are limited to sixty-five (65) hours per year. Vacation request forms may be obtained in the office. These forms must be completed and returned to school no later than three (3) days prior to the scheduled vacation. Additionally, vacation requests will not be approved during exam/CBA weeks or during mandated state testing. The decision to grant or deny vacation requests rests with building administration, and requests may be denied due to academic or other concerns.

**Truancy** – Ohio Law defines Truancy and Excessive Absences:

- Habitual truant – A child who has been absent without a legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in a school month, or 72 or more hours in a school year. Habitual truancy is an unruly offense, unless a child has been previously ruled a habitual truant; then the offense is a delinquency.
- Excessive Absences – A child who is absent with or without a legitimate excuse for 38 or more hours in one school month, or 65 or more hours in one school year.
- Medically Excused Absences- Absences that are properly excused by a doctor, dentist, counselor, etc. will not be counted toward Habitual Truant or Excessive Absence thresholds.

**Loss of Driving Privileges:** Under Ohio law, high school students who fail to attend school with out a legitimate excuse for more than 60 hours during a school month or a total of at least 90 hours during a school year, may be required to forfeit their driving privileges until they reach the age of 18 or receive a diploma.

Therefore, as per Board Policies JED and JECE, along with sections 3321.13 and 4510.32 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Superintendent and/or designee shall give notice of the habitual absence to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles for the State of Ohio and the Franklin County Juvenile Judge. **The registrar shall suspend the driver's license or temporary permit of the student. If the student has not yet been issued a license or permit, the Registrar must deny such issuance.**

The suspension will remain in effect until the student attains the age of 18, is issued a diploma, or until the Superintendent informs the Registrar that the student has completed at least one semester since the notification and is no longer considered "habitual truant".

**Parental Involvement Program/Absence Intervention Team**

Parents or guardian of a habitually truant or excessively absent student may be required to attend an educational program designed to encourage parental involvement in compelling the attendance of the child. Refusal or nonattendance by parents or guardians shall be punishable by law (RC 3313.663(B), RC 2919.222).

**Student withdrawal from school** - If it becomes necessary to withdraw a student during the school year, please notify the school office at least five days in advance. This gives the school an opportunity to prepare documents necessary for transfer. It also allows for school loaned materials to be collected. A withdrawal/release form should be completed prior to leaving the district.

**School closings and delays** - Hamilton Local School District utilizes an automated phone notification system to inform our students/parents/guardians of closings, cancellations, unexcused absences, and any other emergency alert information concerning our district buildings or property.

Our automated notification system utilizes a call list that is generated by importing each student's primary contact phone number linked to his or her student record. At any time, if your child's primary contact number is changed please make certain one of our building secretaries is made aware of the new contact number so they can update the record to display current, valid contact information. Once our district's Superintendent has determined if we will be closed or operating on a two-hour delay, our automated notification system will contact you within minutes.

If school is cancelled or delayed for two (2) hours due to inclement weather the following local television and radio stations will carry the announcement:

TV Stations: WCMH - NBC 4    WSYX - ABC 6    WBNS – 10 TV    WTTE – Fox 28  
Radio Stations: WTVN – 610 AM    WCOL – 92.3 FM    WNCI – 97.9 FM    WCKX – 107.5 FM

You can also visit our district web site [www.hamiltonrangers.org](http://www.hamiltonrangers.org) for school closing, delay, or emergency information.

The district may make up calamity days by utilizing one of these options: Increasing the length of the school day, providing access to online lessons, or distributing blizzard bags.

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## **DRESS AND GROOMING POLICY**

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The Hamilton Local School District recognizes that each student's manner of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. The District will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices affect the education program of the District. This dress and grooming policy has been developed to promote a safe and healthy school setting and to enhance the educational environment. The district expects each student to dress cleanly and neatly, and practice good personal hygiene.

**The administration of the Hamilton Local School District and each building reserves the right to evaluate and rule upon any dress or grooming that is not consistent with a safe, non-distracting educational program that may or may not be contained in this policy. This would include, but is not limited to, new trends or fads in fashion, which may be unknown at the time of the development, approval, and printing of this policy.**

### **General Guidelines**

No article of clothing, accessory, or appearance shall:

1. Distract or disrupt the educational process.
2. Discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, disability, age, sexual orientation, or religion.

### **Use of Face Coverings**

All students in grades K-12 may be required to wear face coverings while: (1) on a school district bus, (2) when entering/exiting the building, (3) in hallways transitioning to their next destinations, or (4) in classrooms, offices, or other locations. Requests for exceptions under this section as well as those necessary for students with a documented health or developmental condition shall be considered by the Superintendent/designee, who may request documentation justifying the exemption. Failure or refusal to wear a required face covering by a student may result in discipline.

### **Unacceptable Clothing, Accessories, or Appearances**

Items that are not permitted include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Hats, hoods, head dresses, bandanas (Except for religious purposes or with permission from administration)
2. Shorts/skirts shorter than mid thigh, unless leggings, tights, or shorts are worn underneath
3. Sunglasses or non-essential eyewear (Unless prescribed by a physician and/or approved by administration)
4. Sleep wear, lounge wear, or blankets
5. Footwear must be worn at all times, however slippers, house shoes, or shoes with wheels are not permitted
6. Chains or chain-like items
7. Shorts/pants that rest/hang-below the waist
8. Bare midriffs, sleeveless shirts, exposed shoulders, tank tops, spaghetti straps, tube tops, or low necklines
9. Mesh, lace, sheer, or see-through clothing
10. Hairstyles and/or hair colors that distract from the educational process
11. Visible undergarments
12. Outerwear worn inside the building during the school day
13. Tears, holes, or types of material, in clothing, above mid-thigh that reveal skin
14. Associations with tobacco, alcohol, drugs, obscenities, profanities, sex related, weapons, or violence
15. Defamatory toward any person, school, community or nation
16. Gang related or affiliated

In the interest of safety, sponsors and teachers of some programs and classes may require alternative standards regarding dress and appearance for participants in their program or activity. Students found to be in violation of the Dress and Grooming Policy will not be permitted to return to class until they are in compliance with the Dress and Grooming Policy. Absence from school or class due to Dress and Grooming Policy violations will be deemed as unexcused. Repeated violations of the Dress and Grooming Policy will not be tolerated. Such repeated offenses may result in more severe consequences up to and including out of school suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion.

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## **CONDUCT POLICY**

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By order of the Hamilton Local School District Board of Education in compliance with Ohio Revised Code 3313.66 and 3316.661 and as adopted by the Hamilton Local School District Board of Education: All violations of school rules and regulations, during the time a student is properly under the auspices of school personnel or involved in any school activity, may result in disciplinary action. This includes, but is not limited to, school buses and property under the control of district authorities, and while at interscholastic competitions, extracurricular events, or other school activities or programs.

**The administration of Hamilton Local School District reserves the right to prohibit and discipline any behavior or conduct that is not consistent with a safe, non-distracting educational program that may or may not be contained in this policy.**

In addition, this Conduct Policy includes misconduct by a student that, regardless of where it occurs, is directed at a district official or employee or the property of an official or employee.

The right of every Ohio resident between the ages of six and twenty-one to a free public education has been undeniably established time and time again by Ohio law and the Ohio courts. Irrespective of race, color, creed, or sex, all youngsters are entitled to equal opportunities to obtain an education conforming to minimum standards prescribed by the State Board of Education. At the same time,

however, the courts have also held that each student in the Ohio Public School System has the responsibility to act in such a way as not to interfere with the rights of others in their same educational opportunities. A student may forfeit his rights when his conduct is such that it substantially disrupts the educational process and thereby deprives others of their rights. It is the philosophy of the Hamilton Local School District Board of Education and the administrative staff to provide students with their rights and require they accept responsibility for their actions. The intent is not to list all rules and acts of misconduct, but to provide guidelines that must be followed to maintain a quality educational program. The disciplinary actions to be taken are believed to be fair, but may be prudently altered by the administration to meet the specific needs of each individual student. Teachers may have specific rules pertaining to their classroom that are approved by the administration and must be adhered to by the students under the direction of the teacher.

#### **Conduct Policy Violation Consequences**

Consequences for any violation of the Student Conduct Policy may result in the following, but are not limited to:

- Community Service
- Detention
- Emergency removal
- Expulsion
- Extended Day
- Forfeiture of property
- Parent-principal conference
- Parent contact
- Parent Involvement Program
- Positive Learning Under Supervision (PLUS)
- Referral to guidance counselor
- Referral to law enforcement agencies
- Student-principal conference
- Suspension
- Verbal or written warning or reprimand

#### **Conduct Policies**

**Academic Dishonesty/Cheating:** Presenting someone else's work, as one's own in order to obtain a grade is considered to be cheating. This includes, but is not limited to, copying other's assignments, quiz or test answers, plagiarism, and unauthorized access. Allowing others to copy work is also a violation covered in this policy. Students who violate this policy will receive zero credit for assignments or work involved. The parent will be notified that an offense may bring automatic suspension from school and/or removal from class/course.

**Attendance Policy:** Students shall not violate the Hamilton Local School District Attendance Policy as detailed in the Attendance Policy section of this handbook.

**Bus Regulations:** The Hamilton Local School District Board of Education provides transportation in recognition of the special geographic and transportation problems noted in its district. Students who fail to cooperate with bus drivers and/or students who fail to comply with basic safety regulations may be denied the privilege of bus transportation and may receive additional disciplinary action. (Parents are responsible for supervising their child until such time as the student boards the bus and after the student leaves the bus at the end of the school day.)

**Cafeteria Procedures:** A student shall not intentionally fail to follow cafeteria procedures, fail to comply with the request of the cafeteria supervisor, or behave in any manner, which could interfere with the smooth operation of the cafeteria.

**Cellular Devices:** Cellular phones are permitted before 7:25am and after 2:25pm. These devices must be powered off and placed in their school locker during the instructional day. Unauthorized use and/or possession of such devices shall be grounds for confiscation and disciplinary action. Use is interpreted as using any device function or feature.

Students bring these devices to school campuses, buses, at school-sponsored activities and while under the supervision and control of school district employees at their own risk. The District assumes no investigative or financial responsibility should the devices be lost, damaged, traded, or stolen.

**Deception/Withholding Information:** A student shall not withhold, distort, forge or falsify any information to a school official relevant to an event, which falls within the jurisdiction of the school.

**Displays of Affection:** A student shall not participate in displays of affection (kissing, embracing, holding hands, etc.) on school grounds or at school activities.

**Disruption of School/Class Proceedings:** A student shall not exhibit behavior that is deemed by the teacher or staff member to be disruptive to the normal operation of the class/school. Such behavior may result in detention, extended day, in or out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

**Dress and Grooming Policy:** Students shall not violate the Hamilton Local School District Dress and Grooming Policy as detailed in the Dress and Grooming Policy section of this handbook.

**Drugs and Alcohol Abuse:** Any student who intentionally sells, purchases, gives, possesses, uses, or is under the influence of illicit drugs, counterfeit drugs, narcotics, steroids, alcohol, or drug paraphernalia in or on school property, including buses, or at any district-sponsored activities/events home or away may be (1) suspended or expelled from school and (2) reported to the appropriate law enforcement agencies for possible legal action. Written or verbal communication concerning drugs or alcohol and/or the use thereof is also prohibited.

The prohibitions above include prescribed and non-prescribed medicines, chemical preparations, inhalants, plants, seeds, or derivatives thereof, as well as hallucinogens, barbiturates, or amphetamines. These prohibitions also include any substance or counterfeit for the aforementioned substances.

**Electronic Equipment:** Electronic equipment/devices excluding cell phones or devices with data plans with headphones/ear buds is permitted before 7:25 am and after 2:25 pm, during student lunch periods, and times designated by the building administration. This equipment is permitted in the school cafeteria/commons/playgrounds and other areas designated by the building administration. The use of this equipment must be non-disruptive and appropriate for school. This includes, but is not limited to, music or entertainment devices, PDA's, and games. Unauthorized use of such devices shall be grounds for confiscation and disciplinary action.

Students bring these devices to school campuses, buses, school-sponsored activities and while under the supervision and control of school district employees at their own risk. The District assumes no investigative or financial responsibility if the devices are lost, damaged, traded, or stolen.

**Ethnic Intimidation:** Harassment or intimidation of a person or group through the use of profanity, racial or religious remarks, obscene gestures, and other conduct of this type is prohibited. Other forms of ethnic intimidation might be, but is not limited to, fighting, vandalism, threats, etc.

**Extortion:** No student will obtain or attempt to obtain money, items of value, or special favors from anyone by implied or expressed threats or intimidation and/or attempt to sell any property on school grounds.

**False Alarms:** The act of initiating a fire alarm or initiating a report warning of a fire or an impending bombing or other catastrophe or emergency situation without cause is prohibited.

**Fighting:** A student shall not attempt to resolve a conflict through active physical means.

**Fire, Unauthorized use of:** The unauthorized use of fire on district property or while in attendance at any district sponsored activity is prohibited.

**Gambling:** A student shall not gamble for money or valuables, buy, sell, or trade items, or exchange money with other students while under the jurisdiction of authorized school personnel. No student, while involved in any portion of the school day and/or school activity, shall possess or use any gambling devices.

**Harassment (Gender / Sexual Identity):** Gender / Sexual Identity harassment may be any behavior, verbal or physical, which is imposed by a student, because of another student's gender or sexual identity, which is intimidating, offensive, abusive, threatening or unwelcomed and which causes or contributes to a hostile environment. Harassment toward a student based on their gender or sexual identity is prohibited.

**Harassment /Verbal Abuse:** A student shall not harass, persecute, or participate in any act that injures, degrades, or disgraces any student, staff, or school employee. A student shall not display, possess or use words, phrases, or illustrations, which are offensive to any ethnic, racial, or religious group. Also, students shall not make reference to sexual activity, attitudes, physical attributes or characteristics, which could be considered offensive, lustful, indecent, or lewd.

**Harassment (Racial/Ethnic):** Racial/ethnic harassment may be any behavior, verbal or physical, which is imposed by a student, because of race or ethnic background, which is intimidating, offensive, abusive, threatening or unwelcomed and which causes or contributes to a racially/ethnically hostile environment. Racial/Ethnic harassment is prohibited.

**Hazing/Bullying:** Hazing/Bullying activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and shall be prohibited at all times. No student, including leaders of student organizations, shall plan, encourage, or engage in any hazing/bullying. Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation unto any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Bullying is defined as an intentional written, verbal or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another person more than once, causes both mental and physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student. The intentional act also includes violence within a dating relationship. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing/bullying and/or dating violence does not lessen the prohibition in this policy.

**Indecent/Lewd Behavior:** A student shall not by any means, including verbal, written, gesture, or dress/appearance behave in a manner, which could be considered immodest, lustful, indecent, or lewd while under the jurisdiction of the district.

**Inducing Panic:** A student shall not by any means create an atmosphere to provoke fear or endanger the safety and welfare of any student, staff member, or any other person.

**Insubordination/Disrespect:** No student shall willfully disobey a reasonable request or fail to comply with discipline, punishment, or consequences issued by teachers or administrators. Also, no student should be disrespectful to any employee or student of the Hamilton Local School District.

**Intimidation/Aggressive Behavior:** A student shall not by means of physical contact (touching or pushing), invasion of personal space, loud voice, or aggressive language attempt to influence the behavior or attitude of a fellow student, school employee, or any other person.

**Language - Profane, obscene, or inappropriate:** A student, while on school property under the authority of school personnel, shall not use profane, obscene or inappropriate language, either written or oral. This would include obscene gestures, signs, pictures, or publications.

**Loitering/Unauthorized Areas:** A student shall not be in any unscheduled or unauthorized area of the school building or grounds without the express permission of a member of the school staff or administration. Nor shall a student loiter (Remain in an area for no obvious reason, hang around or lag behind) in any part of the school building (i.e., restrooms, hallways, etc.) or on school grounds at any time.

**Media, Recording or Transmitting:** A student shall not record or transmit audio/video/photographs of any student, district employee or other person without the express written permission from the student's parent, employee, or other person.

**Personal Property:** The school will not be responsible for any items lost, stolen, traded, or damaged that a student brings to school. Parents should supervise what their child brings to school. All personal property should be marked with your child's name.

**Physical Assault:** A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or intentionally behave in such a way as could reasonably be anticipated to cause physical injury to a fellow student, school employee, or any other person.

**Physical Confrontations:** A student shall not engage in fighting, physical confrontation, or acts of violence. An individual whose deliberate behavior directly leads to a physical confrontation or act of violence between other parties shall be considered a participant, and may receive disciplinary action.

**Pornography:** A student shall not, by any means, possess pornographic materials in any form. This shall include, but is not limited to, writing, reading, electronic, or drawing pornographic material. This policy includes sexting (the act of sending sexually explicit messages or photos electronically, primarily between cell phones).

**Reckless Behavior/Negligent Injury or Damage:** A student shall not behave in a reckless or negligent manner, which could reasonably be anticipated to result in injury to himself or herself, another person, or property.

**Repeated Violations:** Repeated violations of the conduct policy may result in more severe consequences.

**Selling or buying:** Selling or buying without principal approval is prohibited. Authorized items for selling and/or buying shall include but are not limited to lunch items sold in the school cafeteria, school store, school supply machines provided by the office, approved fundraisers, and activity concessions.

**Stolen Property, Possession of:** A student shall not be in possession of any property belonging to anyone other than himself or herself without the specific permission of the owner.

**Technology, Improper use of:** All students are required to complete an "Acceptable Use Policy" agreement prior to using school computers. Improper use of computer technology includes equipment and its use. The school has the right to review material stored in files to which all users have access, and will edit or remove material, which is considered unlawful, abusive, or otherwise objectionable. The school has the right to revoke a student's privilege to use the Internet and electronic mail (e-mail) for abusive conduct by the student. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, sending, receiving, or storing illegal, obscene, abusive, or otherwise objectionable programs, text, graphics, video, or audio files on the school network system. **This includes altering any part of the student email account or profile.**

**Technology, Improper Use of Internet/Social Networking:** While it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to monitor their child's activities during non-school hours, if inappropriate actions or comments posted to social networking sites or via email or text are deemed disruptive or to pose a danger to school related activities, Hamilton Local Schools will work in partnership with our community and law enforcement officials to prosecute individuals violating state or federal law. These actions may also be subject to school discipline.

**Theft:** A student shall not steal or attempt to steal or have unauthorized possession of stolen property, any school or private property, or the personal property of other students or school personnel, either on school grounds or during a school-related activity, function, or event off the school grounds.

**Threat/Coercion:** A student shall not by threat of violence, force, intimidation, or fear attempt to influence the behavior or attitude of a fellow student, school employee, or any other person. This includes, but is not limited to, verbal or written threats.

**Tobacco:** Ohio law and District policy prohibits the smoking, use or possession of tobacco in any form including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, clove cigarettes, chewing tobacco, snuff and any other forms of tobacco in any area under the control of the District or at any activity supervised by any school within the District. This ban extends to all items commonly utilized in the use of tobacco products, which includes, but is not limited to lighters, matches, "look a likes," counterfeits, alternative nicotine products, electronic cigarettes, etc. Students may receive out of school suspension for not abiding by this law.

**Truancy and Tardiness:** A student shall not refuse or fail to comply with state and local attendance laws and policies, including late arrival to school.

**Truancy/Leaving Class without Permission:** A student shall not be absent from any class or properly assigned area without proper school authorization. After arriving on school property or to a scheduled class, a student shall not leave without proper school authorization.

**Unauthorized Touching:** A student shall not knowingly or with reckless disregard cause physical injury or threaten to cause physical injury to any person.

**Vandalism and Property Damage:** A student will not cause or attempt to cause damage to private property, including that of other students, teachers, administrators, or other school employees. Students who destroy or vandalize school property will be required to pay for losses or damages. If students willfully destroy school property, suspension and subsequent expulsion may be necessary. If a student should happen to damage something by accident, he/she should report it to a teacher or the office immediately.

**Weapons or Dangerous Instruments:** Any student, who possesses guns or knives, sells or uses weapons or other devices which may inflict bodily harm on school property may be suspended or expelled from school and reported to appropriate law enforcement agencies for possible legal action. This ban includes any object that is indistinguishable from a firearm. This ban extends to all "look a likes" and counterfeits of dangerous weapons or instruments and includes all toys and replicas of such devices.

**Other Violations:** It should be noted that other examples of conduct reaching the gravity of the above examples might also serve as grounds for disciplinary action.

#### **Seizure, and Forfeiture**

The administration of Hamilton Local School District reserves the right to search the assigned locker, desk, person, and personal property of a student on district grounds, in district vehicles or at any district activity when it is reasonably necessary for the maintenance of order, discipline and safety in the supervision and education of students. At the beginning of the school year, students will be informed that their assigned lockers, desk, persons and personal belongings including but not limited to: purses, athletic bags, and articles of clothing in the locker are subject to search for items prohibited by Conduct Policy or Dress and Grooming Policy, contraband, harmful or dangerous substances.

Contraband - Property that is illegal for a person to acquire or possess under statute, ordinance, rule, policy, or that the District determines to be illegal to possess by reason of the property's involvement in an offense shall be considered "contraband." Such contraband is subject to forfeiture to the District under the District Conduct Policy and applicable Ohio Revised Code.

The Board of Education and District administration authorizes the use of trained canines in detecting the presence of drugs or drug paraphernalia. The canines may be used to patrol the district facilities and grounds, including the lockers and parking areas. Use of trained canines may be unannounced and random. If a trained canine alerts to a particular vehicle, locker or other container, it shall create reasonable suspicion to search that vehicle, locker or container in accordance with this policy.

#### **School Wide Conduct Plan**

At the Hamilton Local School District our objective is to educate children. In order for each child to meet the challenges that he or she will face in our society, the development of self-discipline and individual responsibility are essential. Hamilton Local School District follows a successful Assertive School Wide Conduct Plan that supports the right of each student to an education in a calm, safe, and secure environment.

It is important that parents, school staff and students work together to maintain a positive educational atmosphere. The rules and conduct procedures at Hamilton Local School District have been established for the protection of students. Students are expected to respect these rules as well as the staff and administration responsible for enforcing these rules. The staff needs the support of parents in promoting acceptable behavior. Our goal is for each student to learn to be responsible for his or her own actions.

Serious violations will result in immediate office referral and disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion. Serious violations can include but are not limited to the following:

- Physical assaults (fighting)
- Possession of or under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia
- Possession of weapons
- Defying or disrespecting authority
- Threats
- Destruction of school property
- Profane or obscene language
- Continued classroom disturbances

Each classroom teacher has a similar set of rules and consequences that can be furnished upon request. Students who do not follow the rules will be provided an appropriate consequence such as a warning, conference, detention, extended day, suspension or expulsion. Repeated offenses of the conduct policy may result in more severe consequences. Well-behaved students will be recognized with group and individual rewards.

#### **Detention**

An individual classroom teacher may assign an after-school or lunchtime detention. After-school detention will be held at designated times. Detention, as a means of disciplinary action, gives the student the opportunity to correct behavior and improve skills before administrative intervention is necessary. Students must bring school related materials to detention and may not sleep. School personnel will supervise the detention.

Parents receive written notification of a detention, and attendance is required for any student who is assigned. Failure to attend will result in disciplinary action under the Student Conduct Policy. Transportation is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

#### **Extended Day**

Extended day detentions will be held at designated times. Students must bring school related materials to extended day and may not sleep. Students who skip assigned extended days may receive additional extended days, PLUS or ISS. Attendance on assigned days is mandatory. Transportation is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Work responsibilities or lack of transportation may not be considered as excused absence. Therefore, arrangements should be made for student attendance.

**Positive Learning Under Supervision (PLUS):** The PLUS program may be used as an alternative to In-School Suspension (ISS). Students will be assigned PLUS at the discretion of the administration. Students are allowed to participate or attend any school activities or contests on the day(s) they are in PLUS. Students are to report to PLUS with all textbooks, supplies and materials necessary to complete all assignments provided by their teachers or the PLUS supervisor. Assignments completed in PLUS will be graded by the teacher who provides the assignment, and the students will receive credit for all work completed.

#### **In-School Suspension (ISS)**

In-School Suspension may be used as an alternative to Out-of-School Suspension (OSS). Students will be assigned an In-School Suspension at the discretion of the administration. Students may not be allowed to participate or attend any school activities or contests, or be present at activities controlled by the school until the day following the last day of the ISS assignment. Students are to report to ISS with all textbooks, supplies, and materials necessary to complete all assignments provided by their teachers or the ISS Supervisor. Assignments completed in ISS will be graded by the teacher who provides the assignment, and students will receive credit for all work completed.

**Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)**

Students may be suspended from school for violations of the Student Conduct Policy. Students are not allowed to be present on school property, participate in or attend any school activities or contests, or be present at activities or on property controlled by the school until the day following the last day of the suspension. In addition, the student must be in the custody of his/her parent or guardian during school hours. Students are required to obtain, complete, and return all assignments missed during an Out-of-School Suspension. **Excessive suspensions may result in expulsion.**

**Expulsion**

Expulsion is the removal of a student for more than ten days but not more than one year. At times the behavior of a student can be considered so serious as to justify total removal from the educational program for a prolonged period of time. Actions meriting expulsion are outlined in the student Conduct Policy. Only the Superintendent or his designee may expel a student. Students are not allowed to be present on school property, participate in or attend any school activities or contests, or be present at activities or on property controlled by the school until the day following the last day of expulsion. Only the Superintendent or his designee may make exceptions to this policy. If necessary, we reserve the right to carry student expulsions into the following school year.

**Parental Involvement Program**

Parents or guardian of a truant or habitually absent student may be required to attend an educational program designed to encourage parental involvement in compelling the attendance of the child. Refusal or nonattendance by parents or guardians shall be punishable as a fourth-degree misdemeanor (RC 3313.663(B), RC 2919.222).

Upon the failure of the parent or guardian to cause the child to attend school, the District is required to either initiate prosecution against the parent or guardian in the Franklin County Courts, or if so directed by the Superintendent, send a notice requiring such person's attendance at a parental education program.

**Prohibition of Discrimination**

The Board of Education, administration, faculty, staff and students are responsible for assuring that the Hamilton Local School District maintains an environment for work and study, which is free from sexual harassment or discrimination. Prompt corrective measures will be taken to stop sexual harassment or discrimination whenever it occurs. Any student who believes that he or she has been sexually harassed or discriminated against (or a parent/guardian who believes that his or her child has been harassed) should immediately report it to a responsible school official. This could be a teacher, counselor, faculty member, office staff or administrator. It is a violation of Hamilton Local School District Board Policy to retaliate against anyone bringing forth an honestly perceived complaint of sexual harassment. Students who engage in sexual harassment on school premises or off school premises at a school-sponsored activity will be subject to appropriate discipline, including suspension or expulsion. Sexual harassment is any activity of a sexual nature that is unwanted or unwelcome, including but not limited to, unwanted touching, pinching, patting, verbal comments of a sexual nature, sexual name-calling, pressure to engage in sexual activity, repeated propositions, and unwanted body contact. The school's normal disciplinary procedures will be followed in determining the appropriate consequence for the sexual harassment. In the event the administration recommends suspension or expulsion as a result of the conduct, due process will be afforded to the student in accordance with the district's suspension/expulsion procedures. More detailed information can be found on our district website under the important Forms and Links page.

A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, by electronic mail to:

**Title IX Coordinator:**  
Director of Operations  
775 Rathmell Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43207  
(614) 491-8044 Ext: 1236  
Email: mmeade@hlsd.org

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## **BUS CONDUCT POLICY**

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The Board furnishes transportation in compliance with Ohio law. **This fact does not relieve parents of students from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the student boards the bus and after the student leaves the bus at the end of the day. Students on a bus are under the authority of and directly responsible to, the bus driver.** The driver has the authority to enforce the established regulations for the bus conduct. Disorderly conduct or refusal to submit to the authority of the driver is sufficient reason for refusing transportation services or suspending transportation services to any student once proper due process procedures are followed.

### **Bus Rider Expectations**

Many of our students are transported to and from school by bus. Our primary concern is the safety of all students. All students will be assigned a seat, and as they board the bus they are to go directly to their seat **SIT DOWN, KEEP THEIR HANDS AND FEET IN THEIR OWN SPACE, and TALK QUIETLY** with whom they are sitting. If all students follow these procedures, there should be no problems and the bus ride should be safe for all children. A student may lose transportation privileges for violating any part of the student code of conduct. Transportation will then become the parents' responsibility.

### **Changes in Transportation to / from School**

If a parent wishes to pick up a child after school, or wants a bus rider to walk home with a friend, both students must send a note to the office. Students will be sent home on the bus as usual if a note has not been received prior to 2:15 pm. If a parent has made arrangements to pick up a student at the end of the day and they are not at school at dismissal time, we will send the student home on the bus as usual.

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## **COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY PLAN**

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The protocols in our Comprehensive School Safety Plan are the result of a procedure designed to comply with Ohio revised Code 3313.536.

This plan contains protocols for emergency situations that may develop in our middle school.

Each staff member is issued a Comprehensive School Safety Plan at the beginning of each school year. These plans are located in each classroom and throughout the building. Administrators, staff, and students are instructed on the various procedures to follow in the case of an actual emergency.

### **Our Comprehensive School Safety Plan includes the following protocols:**

Emergency Phone Numbers	Secure Building
Suicide/Death	Child Abuse
Weapons	Building Security
Hazardous Materials	Unauthorized Person
Fire Emergency Evacuation	Student Runaway/Abduction
Hostage Situation	Student Disorder
Tornado/Severe Weather	Utility Emergency
Medical Problems	Bomb Threat/Explosion
Medical Emergency	

**Homeland Security Red Alert Information**

As defined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, a Threat Level of Red is declared when there is a severe risk of terrorist attacks. Under most circumstances, the Protective Measures for a Severe/Red condition are not intended to be sustained for substantial of time.

If the Franklin County Red Alert School Team determines that the threat is a potential danger to Franklin County, the following procedures will be followed:

**If Red Alert is issued before or after school hours:**

Then, normal school operations will cease based upon the Red Alert School Team's recommendations and will remain closed until advised by the Red Alert School Team to reopen. All school activities and events scheduled will be cancelled until notified by the Red Alert School Team.

**If a Red Alert is issued during school hours:**

Then, school buildings will be secured and remain open until regular dismissal time, unless otherwise advised by the Red Alert School Team. Students will be sent home by normal transportation means or released to parents pursuant to district policy. All after-school activities and events will be canceled, unless otherwise advised by the Red Alert School Team.